

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants request an initialed copy of Form PTO-1449 submitted with an IDS filed on November 19, 2003, acknowledging consideration of the references listed on the Form.

Claims 1-3 and 7-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blair et al. (US 2002/0087440) in view of Wagener et al. (US 5,793,028) and Biffar (US 5,903,880). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references, alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the features of the present invention for checking the consistency of whether an action is performed conforming to the process order, as now described in independent claims 1 and 7.

Wagener et al. is cited for disclosing “work defined by a plurality of actions.” Wagener discloses an electronic transaction security system in which a transaction is performed by some requests and responses (for example, transaction request 22, verification request 24, etc.), as shown in Fig. 1. In operation, the transactionor 12 sends a transaction request to a transactionee computer 14 via a verifier computer 16. Subsequently, various requests and responses are performed by the transactionor computer, the transactionee computer and the verifier computer.

While the Wagener et al. reference may teach that a particular response may be triggered as a result of a particular request, Wagener does not disclose or suggest checking the consistency (or the consistency) of whether an action performed by the

received transaction voucher data is performed conforming to the process order of each action, as in the present invention.

Blair discloses a system for validating bill of materials information. The system analyzes inconsistencies with regard to data structure and dependency of data, but not with respect to the process order of each action, as in the present invention.

The Biffar et al. reference is not cited for disclosing the consistency checking features of the present invention. Therefore, even if combined, with Blair and Wagener, the references still would not disclose or suggest the features of the invention as now described in the claims. Accordingly, claims 1-3 and 7-9 are believed to be allowable over the cited references. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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